

CELS



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INTRODUCTION

With a thoroughly discredited de facto government proposing to remain in power through October elections to the January 30, 1984 transfer of power to civilians, Argentina remains in a state of social, political and economic crisis.

As the economic disintegration seems to occur at an ever quickening rate, the Military Junta issues periodic declarations, toughening up on President Reynaldo Bignone, and cracking down on the press, human rights groups and certain politicians, all of which they say are involved in a "campaign to destabilize and discredit the armed forces." Paralleling these statements is the continued operation of state security units in repression and intimidation of the population.

At the official level, all constitutional rights remain suspended under the State of Siege which has been in effect for more than eight years. In recent months, magazines have been shut down, plays and films have been barred, and politicians have been warned to tone down their criticisms of the government. At the unofficial level, journalists continue to be threatened, as do human rights groups and political activists. Incidents of temporary disappearances, brutal beatings and torture of political and non-political victims continued to occur.

Simultaneously, however, the last four months have brought about a heightened consciousness among the general population of the problem of the disappeared, which became inextricably linked to repression in other areas, not only political, but economic and cultural, as well.

The most apparent manifestation of this has been the series of anti-government rallies which have taken place recently, in which the slogans "Reappearance with life of the disappeared" and "Freedom for political prisoners" were central. In November, two human rights marches were held, one in Cordoba and another in the outskirts of Buenos Aires. On December 10, International Human Rights Day, the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo organized a twenty four hour march in the name of the disappeared, in which over 10,000 people participated. On December 16, the coalition of the major parties called a protest march, which gathered over 100,000 people, shouting anti-military slogans, before the police repression dispersed crowds, killing one person.

In addition, demonstrations have sprung up in the outskirts of Buenos Aires and in the interior of the country, protesting tax hikes and the continued lay-off of workers by the big industries. Soccer matches, and rock concerts have even been transformed into political events that generally end with the crowds chanting "The military dictatorship is going to end," and "assassins, assassins."

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Next on the agenda for the military government is the long-awaited "Report on the War Against Subversion," expected to be released at the end of March. According to press reports which cite high military sources, the publication will include four parts. Its release has been viewed by many politicians and Church leaders as a possible resolution to the thorny problem of the disappeared. However, virtually every major politician has declared their opposition to the amnesty for the military which will be included.

The report was initially rumored to include a list of the disappeared. Declarations made by former police chief, Ramon Camps, however, would seem to have made that impossible. Camps admitted that the armed forces had used terrorist tactics in fighting the subversion, and placed the number of disappeared at 8,000. At this point, then, press reports conclude that the first part of the document will consist of an explanation in ideological terms of the so-called "war against subversion." They say the issue of whether to mention the disappeared is still under debate.

The second part of the report will consist of an institutional act, in which the armed forces will assume responsibility for all action taken during the so-called "war against subversion." The third section will be a self-amnesty for the military, making investigation and punishment of crimes of repression impossible. The final part will be a "Law in Defense of Democracy", which will in effect assure the military's future right to intervene in case of a resurgence of subversion. The law would also extend the permitted period of time of detention under the law of habeas corpus from forty eight hours to seven days.

Meanwhile, the courts have been flooded with demands into the fate of the disappeared. Several important cases have been brought before the federal judges by FEES in which evidence of the responsibility of the armed forces and the complicity of the justice system in the torture, assassination and illegal burial of persons was clearly demonstrated.

While none of these cases have thus far been carried to their logical end (most remain stalled under the "secreto de sumario"), press attention has brought into focus the details of the repression, and has pressured judges to continue investigations. One judge, Pedro Narvaiz, was forced to resign and flee the country when investigations into the disappearance of several persons led to the doorstep of former Navy chief, Emilio Massera.

THE DISAPPEARED

In the course of the last three months, the issue of the disappeared has become central to the unfolding political situation of the country. As a result of the internal disarray of the armed forces, the work of the human rights groups and the enormous attention given to the issue by certain information media, the general public has become increasingly conscious of the magnitude and the nature of the repression carried forward by the current military regime. Columnist José Ignacio López analysing the efforts of the church to mediate the national crisis, wrote that the problem of the disappeared "as no other, overshadows the current political situation to the point of conditioning it in a decisive form."

Lists

In January, a new list of names of persons disappeared in Argentina was published, which includes 7291 persons, plus 494 persons who and held temporarily in concentration camps or clandestine places of detention. The list, which was published by CLAMOR (Committee for the Defense of Human Rights in the Southern Cone) in Sao Paulo, Brazil, is the longest yet published. The APDH (Permanent Assembly for Human Rights) in Buenos Aires has a list of 5,566 cases of disappeared persons, with the testimonies of relatives documented in each case. To this they have added a list of 1,164 persons whose disappearance was denounced, but complete information was lacking.

Because of the fear of relatives to speak out at the time, and because of the difficulties for those in the interior of the country in learning of the human rights groups, much less visiting them, it is estimated by Amnesty International that approximately one in every three disappearances that occurred in Argentina since 1975 were reported to human rights organizations. In the last six months, over one hundred persons have showed up in human rights offices to report disappearances that occurred from three to seven years ago. Many of these relatives had never presented a habeas corpus on the missing person's behalf.

In recent months, the military government has declared on several occasions that it has informed some 1,348 families of the fate of their disappeared son or daughter. No such list has ever been made public, and, according to Emilio Mignone of CELS, there are not more than a handful of cases in which relatives of missing persons have been informed of the fate of their loved ones. In those instances in which families have been informed (see cemetery cases), it was reported that the victim died in a military clash, despite the fact that autopsy reports indicated that the bodies showed signs of having been tortured and that the cause of death was a bullet wound received at less than two inches from the head.

Camps' Statements

In the wake of heightened press attention given to certain key cases of disappeared persons under investigation by the judicial branch, General Ramon Camps, former head of the Buenos Aires Police Force, declared that "there are no disappeared alive". In an interview with the Spanish newspaper, Pueblo, published January 27, Camps said "I assume all the responsibility and that of the 30,000 men I directed in the struggle (against subversion)."

Camps came to the attention of the world as a result of Jacobo Timerman's book, in which he recounts torture sessions directed by the former police chief. Camps responded to Timerman with a book of his own, called El caso Timerman: El punto final, in which he accuses the former newspaper editor of being at the center of the subversive conspiracy.

The Spanish journalist reports Camps as asserting that "the government ought to present itself as proud and publicly assume responsibility for all

of its actions." He offered his own set of figures on the disappeared, whom he preferred to refer to as the "subversives", saying that between 1973 and 1979, 2,050 persons were killed by the security forces, 1,500 of which were never identified. Pressed by the interviewer on these numbers

he admitted that figure is closer to 8,000.

- He also said that the so-called "war against subversion" involved only two forces, the subversives and the military. "Everyone acting against the subversion," he said "always did so under orders from the military authorities, although in many cases they had to act as civilians."
- He explained "we had to act as civilians; as to use a uniform was useless." He ended the interview stating that "If there is anything that I am guilty of, it is not having won the political victory as well. But the struggle has not ended, nor has my role in it."

- These declarations constituted the first admission by one of the top military officials that the government was responsible for the torture and murder of thousands of Argentine citizens. The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo responded to the publications of his words with the following statement:

"The confession of General Ramón J. Camps, after almost seven years of what is pompously referred to as the "Process of National Reorganization," decided to publicly confess to the crimes committed by him and other members of the "Process." He has done it for dark reasons, because of personal ambition, a quest for notoriety and with a spirit of boastfulness... not, however, to repent his role in the monstrousities and crimes against humanity, since he is evidently proud of his participation. We imagine that he intended to stifle the cries being heard around the world in protest of the Argentine holocaust, by saying that all the disappeared are dead. However, this effort will bear no fruits. On the contrary General Camps and his associates in the crime will have to provide detailed information on each and every one of the approximately 2,000 disappeared buried as 'N.N.'... as well as on the thousands whose fate remains unknown and whose appearance with life we will continue to demand. Camps must respond before God for his crimes when he is dead, before that, alive he will have to face justice, as Eichmann and other Nazi criminals had to..."

On February 4, some 200 Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo marched outside the Supreme Court while representatives delivered a letter to the president of the court, Adolfo Gabrielli, demanding that he summon General Camps. On February 25, the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights presented a denunciation, in which it was pointed out the "apologia" or the admission with pride of a crime, is punishable by three to six years, according to Article 213 of the Penal Code, for those who, for reasons of the public post, have under their influence other persons. Neither of these cases have been responded to by the judicial system.

The Children

In statements subsequent to the interview published in Pueblo, Camps said that many of the disappeared were known by relatives to be dead or to be living abroad. He sighted as an example the case of three month old Mariani, who, he said, "died in a shoot-out and even though her grandmother knows this perfectly well, she forms part of the group Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo, and she continues to ask for her to be ~~disappeared~~ ^{about her whereabouts}."

On February 16, CELS lawyer Octavio Carsen presented a request on behalf of the grandmother that General Ramon Camps be summoned by Judge Néstor Adamo, (juzgado No. 3 of La Plata). Buenos Aires Police had, according to Carsen, "repeatedly informed the court that there was no information on the whereabouts on the child, in flagrant contradiction with the declarations of Camps" who was head of the police at that time. The summoning of generals Carlos Suarez Mason and Adolfo Sigwald was also demanded, as they were present in the military operation which took place in November, 1976 in La Plata, during which the small child disappeared.

According to the Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo, there are over 130 children disappeared, some kidnapped with their parents, and others known to have been born in clandestine places of detention.

In January, the Grandmothers announced that two children had been returned to their grandparents, in two separate incidents. One, ^{has been} a boy, was born in captivity, his mother having been kidnapped when ^{miss} she was seven months pregnant in December, 1977, and ~~disappeared~~ ^{never} since. However, the father, who was in jail as political prisoner, was recently released and was able to track down the child through an orphanage. In the second case, a girl, six months old when she was kidnapped with her parents in October, 1976, was returned several months ago to her grandparents. The parents remain disappeared. In both cases, the grandparents asked not to be identified, and refused to provide further information for security reasons.

Dupont

Investigations into the September 30, 1982 disappearance of Marcelo Dupont, and his murder on October 7th, remain underway.

Through November and December a certain amount of press attention was devoted to following the case. However, in the last month, ^{the investigation} ~~as a result~~ of the ~~stall~~ in the investigation, the issue has fallen from the public view.

The victim's brother, who has repeatedly stated that he believes the crime was committed by members of the government security apparatus, was a key witness in the investigation of the disappearance of diplomat Elena Holmberg, and had provided testimony that Holmberg had information on former Navy chief Emilio Massera which she was going to report shortly before her disappearance. The brother, Gregorio Dupont, strongly objected to statements made by the head of the Federal Police, General Juan Bautista Sassain, in which he asserted that the crime

was not political in nature. Dupont retorted that Sassain should either investigate the crime or resign, and that such speculations were out of place.

The main effort of the investigations continues to focus on a trip Dupont supposedly took during the period of his disappearance, to Uruguay and Brazil that Dupont supposedly took during the period of his disappearance. Details of the trip, however, have appeared shaky, and in some instances, contradictory.

For example, descriptions provided by witnesses who claimed to have seen Dupont traveling did not coincide with his own family accounts of his habits; e.g., whether he wore glasses, cigarettes. It was also reported by a medical team that hairs found in a bag that belonged to Dupont and was discovered in Colonia, Uruguay did not pertain to the victim. This information compounded two earlier revelations which made the trip appear to be a set-up. First, Dupont had been tortured within twenty four hours of his death, and second, because of recent bankruptcy, he was prohibited from leaving the country.

Gregorio Dupont has publicly discounted the possibility of the trip, and likened it to the trip Fernando Branca supposedly took to Brazil and Uruguay following his disappearance in 1977.

Branca Case

The Branca case resurfaced last September as a result of accusations made by Guillermo Patricio Kelly, a former right-wing activist, that ex-Navy chief Emilio Massera was responsible for the disappearance and murder of the businessman. Fernando Branca disappeared in April of 1977, on the same day he was supposed to go sailing with Massera.

The investigation into the disappearance, stalled since 1977, was reopened under Federal Judge Pedro Narvaiz. Narvaiz, who resigned and fled the country after receiving a series of death threats, had, in assuring the confidentiality of the testimonies, gathered important evidence in the case.

In early January, however, Noticias Argentinas obtained copies of the testimony provided by friend and employee of Branca, Raúl Ibarra. Ibarra reported that shortly before the disappearance he was in Punta del Este with Branca and Branca's second wife, Marta McCormack, the two of whom were attempting a reconciliation. Ibarra claims that the couple fought and that McCormack told him "When I get back to Buenos Aires I'm going to tell 'Negro' (Massera) that this son of a ... does not want to give up the business... When 'Negro' finds out he is going to run a truck over him."

Ibarra also reported that on the day of Branca's disappearance, his car was found in the airport with a note in it indicating that he had gone to Brazil. A telegram later arrived, supposedly from Branca, stating that he had passed through Uruguay and was in Brazil. It was discovered by Ibarra that the telegram bore the same number as a telegram sent inside the country to the Massera family. In addition, the pilot who claimed to have seen Branca on the plane to Uruguay was unable to recognize the businessman in photographs.

In January, Ibarra reported to the police that on several occasions he has been threatened. He complained "Narvaiz has fled the country, the implicated are free, and I am here being threatened with death."

CENETERIES

Following the launching of the "Grand Bourg" case last October, in which human rights groups demanded the identification of over 400 cadavers buried as "N.N." in the Grand Bourg Cemetery, similar investigations have been initiated in the case of twelve other cemeteries around the country. Nationally and internationally,

→ the repercussions of these cases have been considerable, setting off a wave of new interest in the disappeared among sections of the country, and among foreign governments, that had up to now taken little or no interest.

The Argentine military authorities have attempted to avoid the grave implications of these cases by asserting in conversation with politicians, foreign diplomats and journalists, that the "N.N." tombs issue is simply one more indication of the politicization of the human rights movement. These officials point to the fact that many people had known of the existence of these unmarked graves, and say that the information was guarded, to be released at a politically opportune moment.

In fact, the background to the Grand Bourg case is worth noting as it clearly demonstrates the dynamics of how information surfaces and is carried forward by the human rights groups in this period, frequently referred to in the press as the "destape" or the "unplugging" of what has for years been hidden from the public eye.

The existence of the unmarked graves containing the bodies of disappeared persons was first publicized in the O.A.S. 1979 report on human rights in Argentina. Photographs appeared in Time magazine a year or so afterwards, showing the "N.N." tombs, accompanied by an article on human rights in Argentina. At that point, no effort was made by human rights lawyers to demand investigations and identification of the cadavers, as no concrete proofs were available. In addition, many relatives of disappeared persons were against denouncing the existence of the graves, as it implied an implicit recognition of the death of many of the disappeared.

The case of Miguel Angel Sosa, who was kidnapped on May 25, 1976, arose through a series of chance circumstance, and finally provided the irrefutable documentation of the illegal burial of persons by the armed forces.

In February, 1981, the Ministry of the Interior informed the Sosa family that their son was buried in Grand Bourg cemetery in N.N grave number one. The family had in the previous five years presented numerous habeas corpus that were rejected by the court. According to the government notification, Sosa was found dead two days after his disappearance.

→ Emilio Mignone, who had been the lawyer handling the habeas corpus ~~up to that point~~, and Sosa's brother, also a lawyer, went to examine the court files. They found not only an autopsy report which revealed that the victim had been tortured and then shot in the head at short

range, but a letter notifying the family of their son's death, which had supposedly been sent to the wrong address, and had been returned to the court. Despite the fact that Sosa's address appeared correctly in the records, no attempt was made to resend the letter.

At this point, complicity of the judicial branch in the cover-up was suspected and Mignone suggested to the family that they make publicize their situation. The Sosas, however, were reluctant, and indicated that they wanted to be sure of the identity of the body. The next step, then, was an extended legal procedure to have the body exhumed and the identity verified. When the body was finally exhumed at the end of 1981, it was discovered that there were four other bodies buried in the same grave. Meanwhile the family began to frequent the graveyard, and in conversations with neighbors and cemetery workers, they were repeatedly told that during 1976 and 1977 military trucks would come at night with four or five bodies which they would bury. The neighbors believed that these trucks came from the nearby army base, Campo de Mayo.

In September, 1982, the family noticed a small handwritten sign posted amidst the N.N. graves, advising relatives of the unidentified dead that if the bodies were not claimed, they would be removed within a few weeks. At this point, the Sosas felt morally obliged to publicize the situation for the sake of other families like them. It was arranged, then, that six parents of disappeared persons would file suit to prevent removal of the bodies, and to insist that the court obtain from the armed forces the names of the more than 400 unidentified bodies estimated to be buried in the cemetery.

Following the massive press attention which this case received, information on similar cases began to filter in, and within two months, twelve other cemeteries with large numbers of N.N. graves were denounced, and identification of the bodies was demanded. In total, it is estimated that there are more than 1,500 cadavers buried in the thirteen cemeteries. Cases were initiated in the following cemeteries: Claypole, Mar de Plata and Necochea, Luján, Loma de Zomora, Villegas, Moron, Magdalena, Berisso, La Matanza, Córdoba and Tucuman.

Judicial Morgue

→ On November 11, CELS lawyers initiated a second case which ^{would} have important political and legal repercussions. Documented in this instance was the military order of the illegal burial of Norberto Gomez in a N.N. grave, and the complicity of the judicial branch in this action.

Gomez had been kidnapped by plainclothes men in his home in November, 1976. In December, he managed to send word to his parents that he was alive and being held at the Navy Mechanics School. In October, 1982, the family learned that he was brought to the judicial morgue dead in March, of 1977, and that a top army official ordered his burial, along with three other bodies brought at the same moment to the morgue, in an unmarked grave in Chacarita cemetery.

As in the Grand Bourg case, the documentation of the case arose out of a series of chance circumstances. Last October, the Gomez family was sent a notice by the police, requesting their signature on the certification of death of their son. Up to that moment, the family had received no word on their son's whereabouts. In 1978 a habeas corpus was presented on behalf of Norberto Gomez before Judge Carlos Olivieri, but, as with thousands of other cases of disappeared, the case was provisionally closed in October, 1981 for lack of information.

Upon receiving the police request, a visit was made by CELS lawyers with family members to the offices of Judge Olivieri to look into the status of the investigation. In examining the dossier on Gomez, it was revealed that Olivieri had determined that Gomez was dead, and had tracked down his records at the morgue and at Chacarita. According to Olivieri, he had, for humanitarian reasons, decided not to inform the family of his findings.

Olivieri's documentation, obtained through the police office on disappeared persons and made available to CELS lawyers, also showed that three other bodies were brought to the morgue at the same time by the army. The other three included two men, whose names did not appear on the documents, and a woman, Lucia Kalaidian. The military order indicated that the three had died in an armed clash with military and that the group in charge of the action was "GT 3.3.4" which is known to be a Navy intelligence unit. However, autopsy reports also appeared, in which it was reported the bodies showed signs of having been tortured, and that the cause of death was a bullet wound received at short range in the head.

Shortly following the visit to the court, a leak was made to CELS, including xeroxed copies of authorization forms signed by Coronel Roberto Rualdes, coordinator of the repression in Buenos Aires, which ordered the autopsy and burial in unmarked graves of these bodies, without the investigation of a judge. Such investigation is required by law when the cause of death is violent. Also leaked were forms signed by two members of the Criminal Court directly under Judge Mario Pena which approved the military orders.

Central to the Judicial Morgue case was the fact that contrary to the procedures required by law, no judge initiated an investigation into the causes of death of these persons. The morgue, which is a dependency of the Court of Appeals in Buenos Aires, was in effect acting under direct orders from the military with the complicity of the judicial branch. In addition, while the identity was known in at least two of the cases, families were never notified and the cadavers were buried in unmarked graves.

On November 11 four parents of disappeared persons, including the father of Gomez, presented a denunciation before Judge Raúl Héctor Pierini, demanding that Judge Mario Penna, two administrators of the morgue, Mateo and Donnewal,

the head doctor in charge of autopsies, Jorge García Blanco, and Col. Roberto Rualdes, be called to testify. They also demanded the identification of all bodies buried as N.N. in Chacarita Cemetery, investigation into the causes of death of each one, and punishment of those responsible in cases of assassination.

Suspicion that many of the N.N. graves contain the bodies of disappeared persons was supported by neighbors of the Judicial Morgue, who reported that between 1976 and 1978, Army trucks would sometimes arrive at night at the morgue, blocking off the street when they did.

In the Judicial Morgue case, as well as the Grand Bourg case, the information permitting the documentation of the events arose following what appears to have been an unusual episode in which police, several years after the fact, sent notices to the family indicating the death of their disappeared son. In both cases, it has been speculated that it may simply have been a bureaucratic mix up that led to the notification. Other, however, have ventured that they may have been linked to internal power struggles within the security apparatus.

Since the initiation of an investigation in November, Judge Pierini has made public no information from the proceedings. The only indication that the case was being examined was a list issued on December 20, of 76 persons buried as N.N. Not only was the list partial (there are an estimated 600 unidentified cadavers in Chacarita) but in each case the reported cause of death was a "military clash". In several cases, there is clear documentation that the victim was kidnapped in his home by plainclothes security agents weeks or months prior to his/her death. Nevertheless, the judge appears to have accepted the official version without further investigation.

Of the 76 published names, the families of 53 of the dead had already been notified. Many of these families reported to CELS that they were forced to sign their son or daughter's death certificate, on which it was indicated that they died in a military clash. Of the total number only nine persons appeared in the CLAMOR list of disappeared, which provides some idea of the small percentage of disappeared persons the human rights groups have actually been able to document.

On February 10, CELS made a second presentation concerning the Judicial Morgue case. Following the rejection by the court of the right of Gomez' father to serve as plaintiff in the case, and preceding the appeal which CELS was to make of the decision, a presentation was made to the Court of Appeals in which the impartiality of the judges in this matter was questioned. CELS argued that the entire court was incompetent to handle this appeal, as it stood accused of complicity in the illegal burials, given the fact that the Judicial Morgue is a dependency of the Court of Appeals.

Protest of Stalled Investigations

On January 19, CELS issued a statement directed to the press protesting the lack of _____ in cases concerning the N.N. graves. It was asserted that the judges are "acting in such a manner as to indicate their intention to cover up the responsibilities which emerge in these cases, and to avoid the identification of cadavers buried through irregular procedures."

"If this attitude is not modified" continued the communiqué, "new and serious charges will be added to those already leveled against the judicial branch of the de facto regime." This will occur, it is pointed out, once the country is restored to civilian rule.

Three main points were expressed as cause for such a conclusion:

- 1) The complainants and their lawyers are without the means to influence the proceedings of the investigations as a result of the "secreto de sumario" which denies access to information. They are not permitted to see dossiers, nor to examine evidence gathered by the court, such as the cemetery registers, certificates of death, autopsy reports, declarations of witnesses, etc. Nor, since they are not plaintiffs, are they permitted to formulate their own petitions, offer proofs, appeal resolutions, etc. As a result, the level of investigation which the judges undertake remains at the discretion of the official functionaries.
- 2) No information is offered by the courts, either to those directly interested, or to the press. This amounts to a virtual cover up of information concerning a problem which has taken on national and international importance.
- 3) No measures have been taken by the judges to determine those responsible for the crimes. It is known that there are many cases where the armed forces are clearly proven to be responsible for the assassination of persons. Nevertheless, investigations have been limited to determining responsibility of municipal functionaries and employees of the cemeteries. In addition, in almost every case, the burials under question were in clear violation of the law and the justice system has failed to investigate and punish these crimes, which in the last six years has constituted an inadmissible silence. That silence continues to be maintained.

It should also be noted that while in most cases of the cemeteries under investigation, the cadavers did not, as in the case of the Judicial Morgue, pass through a morgue, and, therefore, necessarily appear in the police records. Many of the bodies were brought directly from clandestine places of detention, such as Campo de Mayo, to the cemeteries. However, this does not mean that the bodies cannot be identified. It is unimaginable that the armed forces did not know who it was that they were killing and burying, and therefore, it should be assumed that they have the names of these persons. As a result, partial lists, such as that published by Judge Pierini, are insufficient, as the courts must subpoena the data from the armed forces.

Archbishop and Military Respond

In the wake of the flood of press attention which the cemetery issue produced, the Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Juan Carlos Aramburu created an uproar when he asserted in Italy that "in Argentina, there are no common graves. Each cadaver corresponds to a tomb, and everything was recorded properly in the registers."

In an interview published in the Italian newspaper, Il Messagero on November 11, 1982 Aramburu asserted:

"The unmarked tombs belong to dead people who the authorities were unable to identify. Disappeared? No, you shouldn't confuse things... You know there are disappeared who are living peacefully in Europe. Sure, the problem exists, but it must be dealt with and presented in realistic terms. It is not easy to explain what happened in Argentina in recent years. The provocation was, without doubt, the terrorism, which, luckily, was eliminated... Violence was responded to with violence and a situation was created which we know today, one which is much-discussed in Italy, and I don't know why."

Following the publication of this interview, Rubén Franco, Commander in Chief of the Navy, echoed the Archbishop's statements in Lima on November 12. Asked by journalists about the N.N. tombs, he answered:

"The subject of the disappeared is a motive for agitation by certain sectors that want to destabilize or perturb.... there are no common graves... and many of the disappeared or not in the country but outside. What happened in Argentina occurred because there was terrorist violence which had to be confronted... the victory was a triumph for the entire nation."

On November 17, after several members of the Argentine Episcopal had indicated their disbelief that the Archbishop would make such declaration, Aramburu declared that the interview had been distorted. He suggested perhaps as a result of the language difference. The journalist, head of the Latin American bureau for Il Messagero, defended the accuracy of the interview, stating that he speaks perfect Spanish.

Foreign Governments Demand Information on Disappeared

Contributing to the international attention being given to the disappeared in the last several months has been the surge in interest on the part of several European governments in determining the fate of disappeared nationals.

Italy was the first country to press for information, after it was revealed in early November in an Italian newspaper that there were some 241 Argentine-Italians disappeared, 45 Italians, and 18 children of Italian origins in Argentina since 1976. The issue of whether or not the Italian embassy in Buenos Aires had done everything possible in the last six years to determine the whereabouts of these individuals became a national issue in Italy, and the government was forced to take rapid measures to reiterate its demands for information to the Argentine authorities.

A mission of Italian legislators arrived in Buenos Aires to investigate

the situation in December, after much debate about whether the Argentine government would permit their visit. The representatives met with human rights groups and received hundreds of denunciations of disappeared Italian Argentines, many of which had never been denounced. The Ministry of the Interior refused to meet the group.

Upon return to Italy, the issue of the disappeared continued to be discussed in the parliament, and it was agreed that a working group on the subject would be set up. On January 11, the foreign minister, Emilio Colombo declared "We cannot accept as valid or satisfactory the Argentine authorities' version that it is not possible to know the fate of the disappeared."

On November 17, Spain declared that ~~there are~~ ^{had} 164 of its citizens disappeared in Argentina. On November 4, West Germany announced that 48 Germans ^{had} were disappeared. Peru reported that there ~~it has~~ ^{are} 6 citizens disappeared in Argentina. All three governments in the last months have issued new demands to the Argentine government in which the information on each of these persons ~~is requested~~ ^{for}.

On January 9, a Brazilian mission arrived, composed of legislators and human rights leaders, which reported that 10 Brazilians have disappeared in Argentina since 1975. They also protested the fact that their own government has remained silent on this issue.

In Uruguay, some 80 Mothers of Uruguayans Disappeared in Argentina requested a meeting with their minister of foreign affairs to ask that the government investigate these disappearances. The Mothers were not only refused a meeting, but several were arrested as they gathered outside the Foreign Ministry, and interrogated for several hours by the police. There ~~are~~ ^{are} 123 Uruguayans reportedly disappeared in Argentina, including six children, and it has been reported that in several cases following the kidnapping in Buenos Aires, the victims were sent with Uruguayan intelligence units to Montevideo, ~~where their fate remains unknown~~ ^{an unknown fate in}.

On January 21, a delegation of U.S. congresspersons arrived in Buenos Aires, headed by the chairman of the Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Representative Michael Barnes. He was accompanied by two other Democrats, Rep. Barbara Mikulski and David Bonior. The group met with human rights organizations and with the Ministry of the Interior. Upon returning to the United States, Barnes declared that he was against lifting of the ban on arms sales to Argentina, imposed in 1976 as a result of the gross violations of human rights in the country. He said that it would be interpreted as

- a measure of support for a military government that is completely isolated
- politically in the country and abroad.

Disappeared in 1980

On February 7, CELS presented habeas corpus on behalf of fifteen persons who ~~were~~ disappeared in 1980, and had not been publicly denounced. It was requested that the judge, Dr. Martin Anzoátegui, summon Commander of the Army, General Cristino Nicolaides to explain a ^{statement} declaration he made in April, 1981. Nicolaides stated that he had been in charge of interrogation of persons who had illegally entered the country, and who he asserted belonged to an illegal organization.

Haidar

On January 9, 1983, a habeas corpus was presented on behalf of Ricardo René Haidar, believed to have disappeared between December 18 and 20, 1982. According to a group of Brazilian human rights leaders and congressional representatives, Haidar's mother contacted them in Sao Paulo, relating the news and asking them to investigate the supposed disappearance. Congressman Fernando Morais, former president of a human rights commission, immediately organized a mission, including a congressman and four human rights leaders, to travel to Buenos Aires and denounce the disappearance. As there was no news of the disappearance in Buenos Aires, a press conference was held by the Brazilians, and CELS lawyers presented a habeas corpus of Haidar's behalf.

The government has stated that Haidar is not being held, although a request for his capture had been issued in Cordoba in 1981. An article was also published on January 18, 1983 by Jesús Iglesias Ranco in which he reported a rumor circulating among the military that Haidar was killed in military clash. CELS has added to the original habeas corpus requests for an explanation of why his arrest had been ordered, as well an investigation into the Ranco rumor.

It was also reported that Haidar's mother declared in a press conference that witnesses had seen him in Argentina, and that he had made several calls to Brazil, where his wife was awaiting his return, to postpone the trip. Haidar, who remains disappeared, is the sole survivor of the 1972 massacre of political prisoners in Trelew.

Temporary Disappearances

The practice of kidnapping as a means of detention and intimidation continues to be rampant in Argentina. In some cases, victims have reappeared in police stations. In other cases they have simply been dumped on a roadside, after having been interrogated and beaten. In the last four months, these are some of the reported incidents which have occurred:

Nov., 10. Mario Campora, Peronist leader and nephew of the former president Héctor Campora, was kidnapped and interrogated for several hours on his political activities.

Nov., 17 It was reported in Cordoba that a young professional (unwilling to give her name) was kidnapped and questioned for several hours on her political activities.

Dec., 17. Horacio Daniel Calladao a metallurgical worker was kidnapped at his workshop by three armed men, who showed police credentials to his colleagues before taking him away in an unmarked Falcon. Following the immediate denunciation of the disappearance by CELS, the police admitted that they were holding him, stating that they had suspected him of assassination. Calladao was released the next day in poor physical condition, having been brutally beaten during the night's interrogation.

Jan., 7. Héctor Fernández Leal, a well known actor who has been critical of the government in his public statements, was kidnapped in

Mendoza. After beating him, his captors doused him in alcohol, set his clothing on fire and abandoned him. He was able to put out the flames and walk to help.

Jan., 19 Alvaro Marcelo García, a activist of the Union Cívica Radical, was kidnapped in the city of Chivilcoy, Buenos Aires. He was blindfolded, thrown into a car and severely beaten before being set free a few hours later.

Jan., 24. Florentin Lopez, a Paraguayan living in Buenos Aires, was kidnapped at 3 A.M. in his home by three plainclothes policemen, who took him away in a Ford Falcon. A ~~habeas~~ corpus presented on his behalf the following day by CELS was rejected. Two days later, the police admitted to having detained Lopez, stating that they had suspected him of financial dealings. He was released on January 27th.

Feb., 17 The Secretary of the delegation of Avellaneda of SMATA, Norberto Michelli was kidnapped during the strike against Volkswagen. He was tortured and interrogated on his union activities.

ARBITRARY ARREST AND POLICE INTIMIDATION

Arbitrary arrests continued to be a major area of human rights violations in the last several months. Activists have been detained, as have protesters in major demonstrations, and several university students. Such arrests include the following incidents:

Nov., 7 Forty youths were arrested at a rock festival, when crowds began to chant "If you don't jump, you are a military man," "the military dictatorship is going to end."

Nov., 10. Headquarters in Tucumán of the Union Cívica Radical were raided by plainclothes police. Adolfo Pérez Esquivel was to arrive the next day to participate in a protest march for the disappeared. The headquarters are within 80 meters of the police station, and half an hour after the raid, uniformed police arrived without having been called, to announce that it had not been the police which raided. Several days later, following protest by the Radical leaders, the police admitted some of their members were involved in the raid, although no sanctions against these individuals were ever taken.

Nov., 19. Buenos Aires Federal Police prohibited 16 acts planned by the Communist Party for the following week.

Nov., 24. During a protest march in Lanús in which neighbors objected to the massive tax hikes which have been imposed in the last months, over 40 persons were either wounded or arrested in the police repression. All those arrested were released shortly thereafter.

- Continued*
- Dec., 16. In a demonstration in front of the government building called by the "Multipartidaria", there was severe police repression, with tear gases being randomly shot at the crowd of over 100,000 people. Approximately 130 persons were arrested, police rampaged the city, shooting of gases and arresting persons in areas where there was complete calm. One person, Dalmiro Flores, was shot by security agents who pulled up in a Ford Falcon as crowds were dispersing, and before witnesses, got out of the car took aim at the youth and shot him to death. Witnesses were able to record the license plate number of the vehicle, which was identified as a Police car. The court investigation into the murder has stalled, although the persons inside the car were supposedly identified by the judge.
- Jan., 22 Ten Peronist activists and relatives of political prisoners were arrested at a music festival in Cosquín, Córdoba. They were released after twenty four hours.
- Jan., 31 ^{three} Three persons were arrested in a demonstration held in front of the government building on the occasion of the presentation of a petition to President Bignone, demanding the immediate cessation of government repression. (One of those arrested was Bernardo Barrios.) They were released the next morning.
- Feb., 6 Plainclothes policemen went to the home of a young Communist Party member in La Calera, and forced him into their car, where they interrogated him on his political activities. They released him shortly thereafter informing him that this was just a routine check.
- Feb., 12 Three youths of the Federal Party (headed by Francisco Manrique) were detained by an Army vehicle while painting party propaganda in permitted areas. The three were taken to a police station and held several hours for questioning. The party characterized the action as "clearly intimidatory."
- Feb. 12 Activists of the Peronist Youth, working in a small center which serves breakfast to poor children in the neighborhood of Wilde, San Martín, were attacked by police. Three persons were wounded, Alejo Espindola, Luis Garcia, and Ricardo Benigno Figueroa. Two persons who went to the police station to denounce the incident were temporarily detained. The policeman in charge of the raid, Rubén Rodríguez, was reportedly provoked because the youth were singing the Peronist March. The area police chief declared Rodríguez would be sanctioned. However, no action has thus far been taken. *peronist*

INTIMIDATION AND TERRORIST ACTS

- Nov., 3. Father Lino Fuelaiza of San Justo was attacked by a group of men in La Tablada of La Matanza. The priest, who is known for his work in the poor neighborhoods of the area, was shot in the neck and beaten.

Nov., 5. The home of union leader Jorge Triaca was machine gunned from a passing car. A few days earlier, Tiraca had made statements demanding that military corruption be investigated.

Nov., 11. In the La Plata stadium, where well-known singer, Mercedes Sosa was to perform on the same evening, a bomb exploded destroying one section of the stadium. The performance was held despite the bombing, and ended with the crowds chanting "The military dictatorship is going to end." Sosa's music has off and on been banned by the military government in the last six years.

Nov., 12. A bomb exploded in the Jehovah Witness' church in Comodoro Rivadavia.

Nov., 12. Three engineering students were threatened with death in several incidents, and warned by telephone that they should stop all political activities. One of the victims was a relative of the secretary general of the student center, and the other two are members of its board of directors.

Nov., 14. Headquarters of the Peronists in Mar de Plata ~~were~~ attacked.

Dec., 10. The student center at the Institute for Teaching received a series of telephone threats during the preceding days.

Jan., 1. The front doors of the law offices of Peronist leader and editor of La Voz, Leonardo Vicente Saadi, were bombed.

Jan., 8. The conservative Federal Party issued a statement denouncing the threats being received by federal judges. They reported that Judge José Dibur, Judge Martín Anzoátegui, Judge Fernando Zavalia and Judge Pedro Narvaiz have been threatened by "groups linked to the armed forces."

Jan., 20. The mayor of La Calera, Córdoba received several threats from telephone callers who identify themselves as "AAA", the right-wing terrorist group which operated previous to the 1976 military coup. "AAA" wall paintings have also sprung up around the small town.

Feb., 2. The first of a series of actions took place against the youth of the Communist Party. A young member of the party was intercepted by several armed men in a red Peugot, who beat the boy until ~~as~~ unconscious, leaving him on a street in central Buenos Aires.

Feb., 3. The offices of the Peronists in Nuequen were bombed. No one was injured. However, the front of the building was destroyed.

Feb., 9. A young Communist Party member was hit by stones thrown from a unmarked Ford Falcon in downtown Buenos Aires.

Feb., 9. Another young party member was beaten up by a group of men who were following him in a car in Buenos Aires.

Feb., 17 Two men forced their way into the home of Carlos Alberti son. Alberti was a Radical provincial representative in the mid-sixties. After cutting off the hair of the two grandchildren, the men told Alberti's daughter-in-law "This is a first warning for your father-in-law." The incident occurred in La Plata, a few meters away from the local police station.

POLITICAL PRISONERS

As of the first of March, the numbers and locations of the political prisoners, according to the Commission of Relatives of Disappeared and Detained Persons, were as follows:*

Devoto, Unidad 2	Men	223
Ezeiza, Unidad 3	Women	65
Rawson, Unidad 6	Men	199
<u>Mental Wards</u>		
Borda, Unidad 20	Men	2
Moyano, Unidad 27	Women	1
<u>Provincial Prisons</u>		
Córdoba	Men	4
Parana	Men	7
Mendoza	Men	1
Colonia Penal Loreto		1
TOTAL		503

The legal status of the prisoners is as follows:

At disposition of P.E.N.	152
Military Tribunal Sentence	187
Federal Court Sentence	164

Total number released in last four months: 248
Total since the Malvinas war in June over 500.

It is estimated that at this time there are more than 100 persons with "Libertad Vigilada", in the country, and atleast an equivilant number with "opcion" outside the country. **

In February, all of the political prisoners that had been in Devoto were transfered to Devoto, and La Plata retured to its status as a provincial jail. A few days later, all of the women, who were on the first floor in Devoto, were transfered to a new jail, Ezeiza. It is rumored that they were transfered in order that the prisoner in Rawson may be brought north to Devoto.

* All figures are estimates, as they are based on reports from prisoners. The government does not publish statistics.

** All P.E.N. prisoners receive "Libertad Vigilada" when released, while those with military or federal sentences receive either "Libertad Condicional" or "Condena Cumplida." In general, "Libertad Vigilada" lasts six months, and involves a series of restrictions. For instance, the prisoner must stay within a defined zone (usually the city or county in which he/she resides), a periodical (normally every three days) check-in is required, and attendance of public meetings or (cont.)

After two weeks in Ezeiza, members of the Commission of Relatives who were permitted to visit the prison report that living conditions for the 65 women are extremely poor. The building itself was constructed as a rehabilitation center, and the security measures taken in the construction of the building were minimal. However, because of the "Security Law" which is applied to all political prisoners, the women have been denied access to the basic facilities offered to the common criminals. As a result, the move from Devoto to Ezeiza has meant a serious deterioration in the jail conditions for these prisoners.

Except for meal times, the rest of the day is spent in individual cells or in a small passage way which runs between the cells. There are no meeting places for the women. Typical of the problem of the building's construction is the fact that after meals, dishes are intended to be washed in the patio by the prisoners (as done by the common criminals). However, political prisoners are not allowed in the patio, so they must wash dishes in the bathroom sink, which quickly became clogged and unusable.

The Commission has demanded that either the women be allowed the normal regimen, for which the building was constructed, or that they returned to Devoto.

A campaign is also underway to press for the transfer of all political prisoners to jails in their place of origin. Signatures of church leaders in several provinces have been gathered asking that detainees of those provinces be returned. If obtained, this would be especially important for the prisoners in Rawson, who remain imprisoned at such a great distance that most families can not afford to pay the travel to visit them. It would also help to resolve the problem of Ezeiza, as 53 of the political prisoners are from the interior of country and would be transferred to provincial jails.

Illness Among Prisoners

The lack of medical attention continues to be a central problem for political prisoners. This implies not only lack of proper care but utilization of that care as a means of arbitrary punishment. On Christmas eve, for instance, jail guards denied a diabetic prisoner his medication in Rawson, as a form of punishment for having asked if he could shave before visiting with his mother the next day. In this instance, prisoners in his wing staged a hunger strike in protest and the medication was renewed several days later.

Among the many prisoners with some form of illness are the following urgent cases:

Nora MATTION. Mayano, Unidad 27. Severe mental disorders which resulted from the brutal torture which she underwent immediately following her arrest

participation in political activities is prohibited. "Libertad Condicional", which legally may be granted after two thirds of the sentence is completed, but in practice is granted only much later, involves the same restrictions except that the prisoner may travel anywhere in the country. The "Condicional" is lifted once the full sentence is completed. "Condena Cumplida" signifies full freedom.

Cecilio Manuel SALGUERO. Hospital of Caseros, Unidad 1. On January 22, and again on January 24, the prisoner fainted, according to his companions present at the time, from undernourishment and heat. Doctors which saw him declared that he ^{was} in perfect health, without having tested him for such basic illnesses as Chagas and Machado Guerrero. Salguero disappeared in May, 1977, was brutally tortured for 31 days, and finally appeared (authorities admitted his detention) in a provincial jail, where he was held incommunicado for one year and eight months. From May 5 to June 16, 1978 he was tortured daily with electric shock, asphyxiation, simulacrum of executions, etc. He was then asked to "declare" his defense, and was sentenced to 14 years in prison.

Rosa ALCARAZ. Moyano, Unidad 27. Severe mental disorders. Currently being held under P.E.N.

Alberto MATHEWS. Hospital of Caseros, Unidad 1. Eye wounds suffered several years ago from beatings administered by jail ~~jail~~ guards. Federal sentence, with two-thirds completed.

Albaracin RONCEDO. Borda. Unidad 20. Psychological disorders. At disposition of P.E.N.

Alfredo Hipólito MUSTAFA. Borda, Unidad 20. Psychological disorders. At disposition of P.E.N.

Tomas ALZUGARAY. Hospital of Caseros, Unidad 1. Eye disease. At disposition P.E.N.

Plutarco Antonio SCHALLER. Rawson, Unidad 6. Elderly man who suffers not only from the normal problems of old age, but severe back aches. Schaller was a journalist for El Independiente of La Rioja, arrested in March, 1976 and is held at the disposition of P.E.N., ^{despite a 1981 court order for his release} ~~currently~~.

Isidoro GELSTEIN. Rawson, ^{Unidad - 6} 70 years old, poor health, ^{his} wife is ^{also a politician} prisoner in ~~El Estero~~. Two sons disappeared and one killed in a military clash. Condemned to 13 years by a federal court. Journalist for Editorial Abril.

Fernando Diego SALESAS. Villa Devoto, Unidad 1. Psychological difficulties, in part as a result of his temporary release in October, 1982, and the revocation of his freedom, following the appeal of the state attorney. (He was ⁱⁿ arrested ^{again} January 12, 1983) Salesas, arrested originally in 1975, had served more than two thirds of his sentence.)

Released Prisoners

While many political prisoners are being released, the drama of their situations, in many cases ^{is} only modified. After what was for most ~~of those~~ ^{being freed in these months} over seven years in prison, with poor nutrition, lack of medical attention, a sophisticated policy of psychological destruction through isolation, and arbitrary punishment, virtually every freed prisoner carries with him or her some psychological or physical problem.

Given the general situation of the country
1. Social reintegration, and resolution of the physical difficulties, is not easily ~~found~~ ^{found} given the general situation of the country. *for the 20 prisoners*
~~The basic problem of finding work in a moment when unemployment, and underemployment is the highest in Argentine history, becomes paramount.~~ ^{It is simply} Jobs in factories, banks, large businesses, or the ~~active field of public employment~~ ^{state corporations} are virtually closed to the released prisoner because of political discrimination. Many have also lost their jobs when police chose to "check up" on a former prisoner in his work place, ^{in so doing} frightening the employer in the process. For those who are in "Libertad Vigilada", particularly in the interior of the country, where industry has almost ground to a halt, the difficulties are accentuated, as the prisoner may not leave a defined zone in search of work.

In addition to these economic difficulties, most prisoners are returning to families which have been destroyed by the repression. Many have family members who were disappeared, or who have had to leave the country. Because of the general age group of prisoners, many have small children to whom they are returning, children who have been living usually with grandparents for the last seven years, or who have been abroad. The grandparents, now retired are often times in extreme financial straights, as the 500% annual inflation has hit the pensioned perhaps harder than any other sector in the country.

While several human rights groups have attempted to ease the situation through support of work cooperatives and direct financial assistance, there is no established structure which is capable of offering help to those in crisis.

PRESS FREEDOMS

While in recent months there has been an increased willingness of the press to venture into areas thus far prohibited through government and self-censureship, freedom of the press remains one of the most precarious elements of the current "apertura." In periods of "enduricimiento," or hardening of the military government's line, the first sector to be effected is the press. Magazines are shut down or issues are confiscated, anonymous threats are received by journalists, and the Military Junta issues threatening statements, warning of more drastic measures if the media does not withdraw to its previous position.

During the last four months, the following violations of press freedoms occurred:

Nov., 3 Quorum, a magazine devoted to exposing the crimes of the Italian mafia organization, Propoganda Two, and those of former Navy Chief, Emilio Massera, was shut down by government decree. José Palozzi, the editor, filed suit protesting the closure, and on January 12 the magazine was ordered reopened by the court.

Nov., 3 Linea, a Peronist magazine, was shut down by government decree. ~~It was~~ ^{A court order permitted it to remain open}

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- Nov., 3 Linea, a Peronist magazine, was shut down by government decree. In January, the magazine was allowed to reopen.
- Nov., 10 U.S. journalist, Martin Anderson reported he had received unusual phone calls and been followed by two Ford Falcons. Anderson works with Newsweek.
- Nov. 11 Radio journalist Hugo Guerrero Martineitz, was fined 150 million pesos (\$3,000 U.S. dollars) for statements he made on the air which the government considered "injurious to the Armed Forces." The journalist had, in the course of reading an advertisement for a military academy, interrupted the script to "take advantage of the press freedoms which exist," he said. Guerrero joked "they don't mention that in the military academy you can be on your way to the presidency, de facto or elected... From the level of seargant on, you can start your political career."
- Nov., 21 Television journalist Raúl Urtizberea reported having received several telephone threats.
- Nov., 23 The magazine La Semana, which was shut down on October 29, 1982, was ordered by the judicial system reopened.
- Nov., 24 During a protest rally against tax hikes in Lanús, Buenos Aires, a photographer and his chofer working for Noticias Argentinas were attacked by police.
- Dec., 16 During a massive anti-government demonstration, in which there were over 80 persons wounded, several incidents occurred in which photographers were attacked by police, film was removed from cámaras, and the equipment smashed against the ground. Several of the reporters were wounded by the police. The reporters were: Jorge Durán of El Diario Popular; Rodolfo del Percio and Julio Lopez, of La Crónica; Carlos Acuña and Pablo Algañaraz, of Tiempo Argentino; and Carlos Del'Isola of ABC T.V.
- Jan., 1 The offices of the director of La Voz were bombed (see Terrorist Acts), . In the denunciation of this action, it was reported that La Voz, a peronist paper which publishes more on human rights than any other major newspaper, has received numerous bomb threats. Many of its journalists have been telephoned at home and threatened, and on several occasions, plainclothes police have visited the offices inquiring in an intimidatory fashion after certain journalists.

- Jan., 11 The latest issue of the magazine Humor was confiscated by police as the copies were being loaded onto trucks for distribution. The Minister of the Interior justified the confiscation of over 280,000 copies, stating that the magazine was "subverting the institutional order." It was reported that the article provoking the government crackdown included a reproduction of a conversation that took place between Judge Pedro Narvaiz and General Hector Lopez Dominguez. In the conversation Dominguez warns Narvaiz that he will not take measures to halt the wave of threats to which the judge had been subjected.
- Feb. 10 The state paper company delayed delivery of newsprint to the weekly newspaper Nueva Presencia, a paper known for its outspoken position on human rights
- Feb. 19 Two journalists and three photographers were arrested while covering the arrival of politician Raúl Alfonsín in the Córdoba. The journalists, Carlos Sagristani and Raymundo Vignuda of Tiempo Argentino, Carlos Jornat and Oscar Bequan of La Voz de la Interior, and Francisco Fernández of D.Y.N. They were released after several hours.

Currently, there are nine journalists who continue to be held as political prisoners, in addition to several in "Libertad Vigilada" and over eighty journalists disappeared. Those in prison are: Pedro Cazes Camarero, former editor of El Combatiente; Hugo A. Dedieu; Isidoro Gelstein of Editorial Abril; Miguel Moflino; Plutarco Schaller; Alicia Zeoli de Weiland; Luis Alarcón; Pedro Perez; and Eduardo Yazbek Jozami, former head of the journalists' union in Buenos Aires.

HARRASSMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS

On October 26, Judge Guillermo Ledesma responded to complaints brought before his court of threats received by human rights workers by indicating that he could do nothing to stop harrassment. "In this society there are certain dark forces," he said, "which maintain their vigor and continue to operate with impunity." They will continue to exist, he went on, until "there is a decision by the leadership of the structure from which they emerge."

Indeed, a close parallel may be drawn between periods in which the military authorities lash out with public statements against the human rights groups, and the waves of wall poster smear campaigns, telephone threats, and most recently bomb threats. On November 17, 1982, General Edgardo Calvi, Chief of Staff of the Army declared "the subversion is connected to human rights (groups)." He asserted that the "subversives finance everything from declarations and trips of mother, of terrorists to the permanent publication biased accounts of the war which we have lived."

During the course of the next three days, five Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo were victimized by wall poster smear campaigns. Posters were printed accusing Juana Maller de Pargement, a member of the Board of Directors of the Mothers, of being the mother of a terrorist

doctor and insinuating that her son was alive and that they too were "in search of him." The posters were identical in lettering and paper to those which have appeared over the course of the last six months with similar contents. A reproduction appears below.

Other incidents of harrassment and intimidation which have occurred are :

Nov. 18. The home of Emilio Mignone was painted with red spray paint, accusing his wife of being a mother of a terrorist and him of being a lawyer for terrorists. Mignone lives next to the highly guarded home of Admiral Isaac Rojas.

of police. On November 27, Mignone denounced these incidents before Judge Daftis Niklison, demanding that General Calvi be called to testify in the investigation of the crimes, in order whether "this last campaign of threats was simply instigated by him, or whether it was actually a result of his direct orders."

The harassment, however, did not subside, and General Calvi, of course was not called to testify. On November 23, the home and the area in front of the house of Hebe Bonafini, President of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, was spray painted with "Mother of Terrorist". On November 28, the Mothers reported that a new series of paintings had appeared in front of the homes of several other mothers. In early December, Alfredo Galletti, member of CELS, and Elida Enriqueta Bussi, a Mother of the Plaza de Mayo, received telephone threats on several nights, in which a voice told them "there are two graves in the cemetery Las Flores marked for you and your husband." Also in early December, the offices of the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights in Santa Fe had sprayed on it "House of Terrorists, of Montoneros and ERP." In La Plata, the Assembly's offices were also painted with similar accusations.

On December 12, Raquel Cristina Coronel, a lawyer who defends political prisoners, reported that men had come to her house twice to question the superintendent on her activities, and that she had received several telephone threats in her office (in which she was) warned, "If you keep on with this work we are going to kill you." On December 22, two members of the Commission of Relatives of Political Prisoners and Disappeared Persons, Lilia Jons de Orfano and Lucas Orfano had their home spray painted and posters accusing them of being terrorists put-up on the street outside their house.

On January 1, a phony bomb was placed in the doorway of the Justice and Peace Service. A ceremony was to be held there in the name of Dalmiro Flores, (the boy killed by state agents in the December 16 protest march) and the apparent intention of the bomb was to prevent the ceremony from taking place. The police were called, when they arrived they attempted to prevent Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo from entering the building. The Mothers, however, insisted on walking past the supposed bomb, into the building and conducting the ceremony. Police meanwhile, exploded the small box, finding that it contained two bricks and a small detonator.

On January 7, the president of the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights Edgardo Pimental, reported that beginning on December 21, he and his family received a series of telephone threats, in which even the life of his two year old grandchild was threatened. Pimental denounced the harassment before Federal Judge Zavalia and requested that his telephone be tapped in order that the police could track the calls. He also reported that a few days earlier his son in law, Fabian Gonzalez, was threatened by two armed men while he was working his job as an air trafficker.